The Quakers of Swansea and Neath

THE QUAKER OF THE OLDEN TIME!
HOW CALM AND FIRM AND TRUE.
UNSPOTTED BY ITS WRONG AND CRIME
HE WALKED THIS DARK EARTH THROUGH.

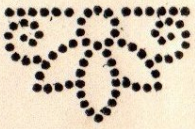
—Whittier

PRICE
THREEPENCE

DAVID JONES
Hyfrydle Fairfield Terrace
Swansea

THE QUAKERS OF SWANSEA AND NEATH

David Jones : "Hyfrydle" : Fairfield Terrace : Swansea



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Some Account of the Early Quakers of Swansea and Neath.

COULD we but take a trip in H. G. Wells' Time Machine and fly back a period of some 300 years we should have as our contemporaries many well-known names in English History We should come down in the reign of Charles the First, Cromwell, John Hampden, John Bunyan, Wm. Penn, George Fox; in days of Civil War and unrest.

George Fox was born in 1642 at Drayton-in-the-Clay, Leicestershire. We are all fairly familiar with his life-story ; we know how he sought in many places to find peace and tranquility of soul, visiting one Minister after another, getting all sorts of advice—from marrying to smoking—but all in vain. As regards marriage, he was then 21 years of age. He says " I am but a lad, and must get wisdom." He found that there was none among them all that could speak to his condition, and when his hope in them and in all men was gone " so that I had nothing outwardly to help me, nor could I tell what to do, then I heard a voice which said There is One : even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition. When I heard it, my heart did leap for joy."

" Previous to the year 1642 the condition of Wales from a religious point of view was most deplorable "—from the writings of John Penry, who may justly claim to be the pioneer of Welsh Nonconformity as well as its first martyr.

Penry, writing in 1588, says of Wales, his beloved country, "there is not a shire, town, or parish where for six years together in the last twenty-nine years has there been a godly minister doing the duty of a faithful teacher. Thousands of our people know Jesus Christ to be neither God nor man, priest nor prophet, almost never heard of Him. O desolate and forlorn condition ! Preaching itself in many parts is quite unknown; in some places a sermon is read once in three months."

Things had improved by 1640, when the first Dissenting Church in Wales was founded in 1639 at Llanvaches. From that date Nonconformity gradually became a power in the land.

At this time in all parts of the country there were small groups gathered together seeking for the Truth. George Fox visited many such companies and found amongst them some of his most stalwart followers because his message appealed to a large number of the people of his day. George Fox had no intention of forming a new denomination or sect, but to declare Truth as he saw it—as the Doctrine of the Inner Light. In fact, these people were called the Children of the Light because he spoke so much of the Light of Christ. Later on they adopted the name of Friends, but prior to that they had been called Quakers : this name was first given to Geroge Fox by Judge Bennett of Derby because he bade the Judge tremble at the Word of the Lord. Many of George Fox's disciples travelled through Wales. Probably the earliest Quaker Evangelists to labour in Wales were Thomas and Elizabeth Holmes in the year 1654. It is possible they were the first Quakers to visit Swansea (somewhere in 1654 or 1655).

At any rate, we have it on record that another of his bravest followers was at Swansea in the year 1655. In that year, John ap John (a Welsh-speaking Welshman) was in the Steeple House, as Fox called the Church (St. Mary's Parish Church). After the preacher had finished his sermon, John, exercising one of the privileges of the day asked the preacher whether he was a Minister of Christ. The question gave great offence to the priest and to another of the same class who was present. The latter seized John ap John by the collar and without suffering him to speak another word, dragged him out of the Church and delivered him to a constable. John spent the night in a dark, cold prison, and the next day appeared before the Magistrate, eventually being sent to prison. The records fail to show how long he was in prison on this occasion. According to Joseph Besse, John ap John returned to Swansea in 1658 and again got into trouble. Nothing could stop his preaching, and for publicly opposing a priest named Evan Griffiths, he was dragged out of the Steeple House (St. Mary's) by the hair of the head by a preacher whose name was Roberts. When brought before a Justice, John ap John was pulled by the nose by Morris Bedwell, priest, of Swansea, and sent to gaol for 20 weeks, being then discharged without any legal trial. This good man suffered similar treatment at Cardiff,

George Fox's first Visit to Swansea

George Fox's first visit to Swansea was in 1657, when we are told he had a blessed meeting, a gathering being settled in the Name of Jesus. Visiting Brecon, he had an exceedingly rough time as the Magistrate set the mob on him and his followers, but nothing worse than the shouting seems to have occurred. George Fox again visited Wales and held meetings here and there as far as Tenby.

I should like to quote from Dr. Thomas Rees's "Nonconformity in Wales." He says there were amongst the founders of the denomination some men of high respectability in point of social position, talent and education, but the generality of their followers, though probably sincere and well-meaning, were rude, insolent and anything but gentlemanly in their behaviour: quite a contrast to the amiable, philanthropic and inoffensive members of his day.

He states in the preface to the second edition that his remarks had greatly irritated his good friend Jonathan Rees of Neath, but he admits they were good, godly and valuable men, notwithstanding their petty prejudice and imperfections. He further says that the Quakers treated the Ministers of Religion with unjustifiable incivility, calling them blind priests, hirelings and deceivers. They made it a point to disturb the religious services by standing up in the midst of the sermon to contradict the preacher. For this flagrant violation of the established law, many were imprisoned, and none but themselves would have considered the imprisonment as suffered for righteousness' sake.

The first Friends in Wales, he says, did not consider it their duty to go out into the highways to gather into their fold the irreligious masses, but they looked upon themselves as especially commissioned to convert the members of the existing churches and to build up their sect on the ruin of other sects. Their rise therefore was in no sense at that time a gain to religion, but a decided injury. Yet as time taught them wisdom they became, in proportion to their number, one of the most useful and amiable of all the religious denominations.

Dr. Rees, quoting from Besse's "Sufferings of the Quakers," states that we have the names of nearly 400 Friends in Wales who suffered more or less for their Nonconformity from the year 1660 to 1668.

In 1883, when his book was written he says "The Society of Friends are now the smallest of the Nonconforming bodies in Wales. Their Meetings are 4 and the number of members 127, besides a few in scattered places : the total would certainly be under 150." They were mostly located in Radnorshire and Glamorgan. He says that these good people in the last half of the 17th century and the first half of the 18th were numerous in Wales and all of them suffered the most cruel persecution, but by their sufferings and philanthropic activity did as much, if not more, than all the other denominations to secure to the inhabitants of Wales the liberty and privileges we now enjoy. Small as their numbers now are, there are still among them some of the most excellent characters worthy of their eminently good forefathers.

Even women Friends were not exempt from persecution in those early days. We read of Margaret Thomas and Rebecca Thomas, who gave evidence against the priest that abused John ap John, and, in consequence, were also abused, imprisoned and turned out of the town. Other women were put in the Dark House in Swansea. We read that Elizabeth Holmes went to the Church and preached to the people. The Swansea congregation were attentive until the priest came and interfered and secured the imprisonment of the woman speaker. She was put in the Dark House, chained by the leg at a great distance from the door so as to prevent her speaking to the priests as they passed by.

On one occasion the soldiers arrested all the men they found gathered together in the Swansea Meeting House and committed them to prison. Some prisoners were also kept underground in a cellar for 4 or 5 months, and a poor woman whose husband was blind, was shut up in a nasty cock loft for many weeks.

When William Penn in 1682 founded the colony of Pennsylvania, many Quakers from Wales escaped persecution by emigrating thither and their descendants continue there to this day. It is estimated upwards of 2000 Friends left Wales for Pennsylvania, where there are still many towns with Welsh names as Brynmawr, Meirion, Radnor, Montgomery, Gwynedd, Haverford, St. David's and Narberth.

William Bevan the Quaker

I should now like to introduce to you the Quaker to whom we, as Swansea Friends, are most indebted—one William Bevan, the Quaker.

William Bevan was born in Swansea in 1627 (three years after George Fox) in the reign of Charles I. He held a good position in the town, being a Merchant, and must have been held in great respect by his fellow townsmen, serving for many years as an alderman, until on account of his Nonconformity, he had to sever his connection with the Corporation.

He became a Quaker by conviction, influenced probably by the preaching of George Fox or Thomas Holmes. There is an interesting document, dated Swansea 1656, which narrates that this Meeting House and a large plot of ground surrounding it was given by William Bevan to the People of God—in scorn called Quakers—to be theirs and their heirs for ever.,

This sturdy old Friend was not afraid of his religious opinions, for he carried them into practice in refusing to pay tithe and Church rates, for which offence he suffered two years' imprisonment and was twice fined £20.

From the following extract from Besse's Sufferings we should judge him to be a brave and gallant gentleman, for it says ". . . for in like manner Margaret and Rebecca Thomas (to whom reference has been made) for bearing their testimony against the fighting priests of Swanzey were much abused and imprisoned there, and at length turned out of the town ; and when William Bevan of that place went with his boat and brought them over the water thither again, he also was imprisoned and put in chains."

William Bevan died on December 5th, 1702, aged 75 and is buried in the graveyard of the Meeting House he gave to Swansea, by the side of his wife Priscilla, who predeceased him.

William Bevan's farewell to his family on his deathbed (from Evans's " Piety Promoted ") is a fitting close to a life which had consistently witnesssed to the Truth during days of doubt and darkness.

To his son Sylvanus and his daughter Hester he says " I desire that ye may live together when I am gone and keep to Meeting, and let your house be open to those who bring glad tidings of the Kingdom of Peace, for they are faithfull labourers, and if you have but little, God will add a blessing." Another time time when weak in bed, his sons and kinsmen present, he said to this effect, "Grandson William, be obedient to those thou art under, fear God always and run not into the fashion of the world; but behave humbly and lowly, and God will add a blessing to thy endeavours. Be kind to your sister Hester and assist her in the choice of a husband," for, said he "she has been tender to me since your mother died and a support in my old age. To the Lord I leave you, desiring him to bless you, which is the best portion I can give you." His children all kissing him, he concluded at this time in much tenderness and tears, having seen twenty of his children's children and growing weaker and weaker in body. He resigned this life in that quietness and innocency in which an infant goes to sleep.

"A Quaker of the olden time,
How calm and firm and true,
Unspotted by its wrong crime
He walked this dark earth through.
The lust of power, the love of gain,
The thousand lures of sin
Around him had no power to stain
The purity within." (Whittier)

We now meet the first Sylvanus Bevan of this family, one of the sons of William Bevan. The name of Sylvanus seems to have been retained in the family through all the generations even to this day, as we are all aware the Bevan family are well represented in Gower, and there is at any rate still one Sylvanus Bevan living. Sylvanus was also a Burgess of the Town of Swansea, his name appearing on the Rolls as Mr. Sylvanus Bevan, Merchant.

Sylvanus did not seem to have taken such a prominent part in the religious affairs of the Society as his father did, but from the following extracts we see he identified himself with Quaker worship and was ready to entertain strangers unawares. Thomas Story, whom we have often heard quoted in the Meeting House from time to time, writes

on March 4th, 1707 "I went to Swansea where I was kindly entertained by Sylvanus Bevan and next day, first of the week, was at their Meeting ; it was not very large nor very open, but larger and more open in the afternoon. Yet some heavy things lay at bot tom I stayed the day following, and had another meeting in the evening at his brother's house, which was more open, there being several people there, and in hearing about the house."

In 1685 Sylvanus Bevan married Jane Phillips, the daughter of William Phillips, a Swansea Quaker. Sylvanus Bevan died on December 4th, 1725, and is probably buried here as is also his son Paul Bevan, who died in 1767 (a part of the gravestone is still in the wall of the Elysium).

Paul Bevan was the younger son of Sylvanus Bevan and lived all his life in Swansea, where he also traded as a Merchant. Seemingly he was not very rich for we find he was desirous of buying some wood valued at £4,500 from the Duke of Beaufort, but it said that he could as soon raise the dead as raise the money.

When Sylvanus Bevan died in 1725, the link that bound his family to Swansea was broken, for his sons went to London to seek their fortune. The first Sylvanus Bevan's son (1691—1765) left Swansea as a young man and established his Pharmacy in Plough Court Lombard Street, London, and was joined by his brother Timothy, who married Elizabeth Barclay at the Bull and Mouth Meeting House. Elizabeth was descended from the Barclays of Ury, a well known Scottish Quaker family.

Sylvanus and Timothy were the founders of the Plough Court Pharmacy business so well known today as Allen and Hanbury's.

Another Sylvanus Bevan (1743—1830) left the apothecary business and joined his uncle, James Barclay, in the more congenial work of Banking, founding Barclays and Bevan's Bank in 1767.

Sylvanus Padley, a descendant of William Bevan, was Harbour Master in Swansea in 1804 and died in 1855, and is, I believe buried here.

George Fox's second visit to Swansea was in 1667. He says "we travelled till we came to Swansea, where, on the first day, we had a large and precious meeting, the Lord's presence being eminently amongst us. On a week day afterward we had a general meeting beyond Swansea, of men Friends from Swansea, Tenby, Haverfordwest and other places, and the Monthly Meetings were settled in the Gospel Order and received by Friends in the power of the Lord, whose Truth was over all. From hence we endeavoured to get overt he water to Cornwall, and in order to do so, went back through Swansea to the Mumbles, thinking to get our passage there, but the master deceived us, for, though he had promised to carry us, when we came he would not. We went to another place where there was a passage boat, into which we got our horses, but some rude men in the boat (though called gentlemen) threatened to shoot the master if he took us in : he, being afraid of them, turned our horses out again, which put us out of hope of getting over that way. Wherefore, turning back into the country we stayed up all night and about 2 o'clock in the morning took horse, and travelled till we came near Cardiff, where we stayed one night. The next day we came to Newport, and it being market day there, several Friends came to us, with whom we sat awhile, and after a fine refreshing season together we parted from them and went forward." As far as I can find, that was his last visit to Swansea and South Wales.

The persecution of the Quakers did not cease until the middle of the 18th century. We read that hundreds of the Welsh clergy of that age could not refer to a single soul they had been the means of converting from the error of their ways, but many could refer to bodies incarcerated, and families ruined by them for non-payment of tithes, Church rates, and other strange claims. Not a bed was left to some poor Quakers; families were deprived of their stores of hay and cattle ; many of them had no milk for their children, nor bread, nor horses for ploughing. Some were deprived even of their working tools.

Among some of the well-known Friends who visited Swansea in the early days, was Thomas Low (according to W. H. Jones's "History of Swansea ") and was received by Gwenllian Williams, a widow, in 1665. He bore testimony at several meetings, which was accepted by

many. I have previously referred to Thomas Story, the American Friend, and there was Benjamin Holmes of York, who died at Paul Bevan's House in 1759 and is buried here.

William Brown from Philadelphia, accompanied by John Player, paid a visit to Swansea on November 2nd, 1753. They stayed the night in the house of James Griffiths, attending the week-day meeting. It was a heavy meeting; it was the love of the world being exalted among many of them from the love of the Father, of which they were faithfully warned.

I was very much impressed when reading some of the names of those buried here, of the very few Welsh names, the majority being English. Among them—Allis, Ashmorn, Bacon, Begg, Berry, Baths, Eaton, Heywood, Holmes, Knight, Padley, Peer, Pollard, Squires, Tregelles, Rutter Clutton. Amongst the Welsh names were Bevan, David, Williams, Phillips and John Thomas, the latter stated to be a descendant of William Bevan. He was a characteristic Quaker who was the first Friend, so it is said, who was allowed to give evidene in a Swansea Court of Law without taking the oath. On one occasion he was the only one who could give evidence with regard to certain copper stolen but refused to take the oath. The judge, on being informed, said "Bring him along if he is a Quaker. I will take his word without the oath." John Thomas died in 1866, aged 83.

Swansea Meeting is the oldest in Glamorgan.

It would appear that persecution had almost entirely ceased by 1800, when the Quakers as a body seemed to be on the whole comparatively wealthy and in good positions, as shipowners, manufacturers, brewers, chemists. About that time there must have come to Swansea and Neath a good many Friends from Cornwall, Plymouth, Bristol and other English towns.

The Quaker played an important part in the industrial and educational as well as the religious life of Swansea and Neath during the first half of the 19th century.

We have but to recall the name of the Dillwyns who came into the life of the town in 1807 and whose connection with the Cambrian Pottery has made Swansea world-famous for its China. Many of

the employees were also Quakers. William Weston Young of Aberdulais was the painter and decorator, the views which he painted on the Swansea China ware being chiefly sketched in the beautiful Vale of Neath. He also illustrated some of Dillwyn's works on Botany.

Another was William Pollard, son of Joseph Pollard, a Quaker minister who lived at Landore. He was one of the best-known painters on Swansea China ; he excelled in painting the Burrows Rose, also called the Burnet Rose.

Swansea has been the scene of Quaker enterprise for over two centuries. Sylvanus Bevan, James Griffiths, Pollard and others in in the early part of the 18th century were connected with the White Rock and other works.

The firm of Henry Bath and Sons were connected with the port for upwards of 100 years. Many of the older inhabitants of the town still remember the names of some of their ships, some of them called by the letters of the Greek alphabet—Alpha, Beta, Gamma—and others from Fennimore Cooper's works—The Deerslayer, Pathfinder, etc.

Some of the Quakers became successful Bankers in the town, the name of Robert Eaton, banker, being perpetuated in Eaton Grove.

The Bank of Neath was owned by Robert Eaton and Joseph Gibbins of Swansea, and William Gronow of Neath Abbey, in 1815. The Eatons were strong Quakers, and in 1833 there were eight of that name on the Swansea list of members. Before the advent of these families the Quaker cause was at a low ebb in Swansea, for we find at the half-yearly meeting held at Brecon on August 22nd and 23rd, 1799, the state of the Society at Swansea and Neath was considered in the hope that both places would be benefited ; it was agreed that the Friends in or near Neath may hold a meeting there on the first of week days as a separate meeting belonging to the Monthly Meeting of Carmarthen and Glamorgan, and a Meeting at Swansea only on the morning of First Day.

Owing to the low state of Swansea, Neath Friends were asked to keep a watchful eye on it, and Friends from Neath were to go there when drawn, to sit with the few and thus strengthen them.

Towards the end of the 18th Century, monthly meetings were held in Carmarthen, but, from 1813 onwards, Swansea and Neath became favourite meeting places.

It is evident that many of the well-known Quaker families of the earlier days were no longer members of the Society in1833. The list of members of the Monthly Meetings for that year records no Dillwyns, Players or Miers, so they had evidently severed their connection with the Society before that date.

In reading that list the few Welsh names is again surprising. Amongst the Swansea members of those days were to be found doctors, merchants, bankers and works proprietors.

The Swansea Friends took a great interest in education, being staunch supporters of the Lancastrian Schools.

It was a Friend who first started a Dispensery in Swansea, the forerunner of our present Hospital.

A Lancastrian School was opened at Neath Abbey and Neath These were the first schools in the district and were known as Quaker Schools. The late Sir S. T. Evans, Judge of theAdmiralty Court, began his scholastic career in Neath Abbey Quaker School, where there were no religious tests.

In 1912 there passed away an old lady resident of High Street who could recall with pleasant interest and delight the Quakers of 1850. She had often watched the men and women entering and leaving the Meeting House in their old-world Quaker garb. She watched with wonder the long stretch of carriages reaching from King Street to the Meeting House. In 1890 they had all passed away.

The Neath Quakers

Our Neath Friends are far more fortunate than we are, as I can find brief accounts of all the well-known Quaker families of Neath in Mr. D. Rhys Phillips's book, " The History of the Vale of Neath,") from the time of Peter Price (the founder of The Neath Abbey Foundry) up to the present.

The Neath Abbey foundry was noted for the excellent quality of all the pump-engines turned out there.

John Lloyd, in his book, "The Old South Wales Ironworks" says " We have no papers saying when this forge was first formed, but as far as we know the works has always been in the hands of Quaker families, It is quaintly said they never tried to grow large, but were contented to jog along at a moderate rate, but ever mindful to turn out work of the best make. Unlike other Ironmasters in South Wales, they did not get together a fortune by casting or boring cannon for scenes of warfare."

A paragraph in the Western Mail of May 30th, 1923 indicates eloquently that while the very names of the famous Iron Masters of Neath Abbey have become a mere memory, the machines which they made nearly 100 years ago are still being used to commercial advantage. In these days of scrapping machinery, it would be difficult to find anywhere in Britain a parallel to this remarkable record. At the Lightmoor Colliery in the Forest of Dean there is a Cornish Condensing Pump made at the Neath Abbey Ironworks in 1845. The engine is still in its original state and is of beautiful design and workmanship. It is brightly polished, and works as well today as it did when the present manager, Mr. Meredith, started 44 years ago. This colliery has a winding engine which was also made at the Neath Abbey works.

Peter Price, who came to Neath about 1800, was born at Southport in 1739, but lost his father at an early age. As a child he was fondled at Derby by Prince Charles Edward, for the family were strong Roman Catholics.

He was in the American Army for a time and while in America he met William Dillwyn (who later settled in Swansea) who was the instrument of Peter Price's conversion to Friends. Elizabeth Davies of Neath, wrote a ballad to the memory of Peter Price, Ironmaster, of Neath. A faithful member of the Society of Friends, he distinguished himself in mnay acts of charity for the relief of the poor and the distressed. He erected a free school for the poor children of Neath Abbey, he delighted in supporting Christianity at home and abroad, and was a liberal supporter of Missionaries and the Bible Society.

One of the verses says—

" No gaudy dress, no tawdry tinsel toys,
Their minds were fixed on far superior joys.
Their time, their talent and their store
Were freely shared with the distressed and poor"

Anna Price, the widow, was born in 1759. She travelled from Falmouth to London to attend Yearly Meetings at the age of 17. A letter written to her mother at this period lifts the veil on the addiction of Quaker Dames to my Lady Nicotine. She writes " I am sitting down in the Counting House writing while our dear Friends Rachel Wigham and Barbara Drewry sit smoking their pipes and other Friends are in the parlour. My mother may partly guess how agreeably time may be spent with so many valuable Friends on these public occasions; on whose countenances are written that they are followers of their dear Master, and their garments washed white in the blood of the Lamb.

The first known Neath Quaker was Thomas Roberts, who had an Ironmonger's business on the site of the present Working Men's Club, High Street. He is mentioned as early as 1749. In 1774 he left a legacy of £40 to the Quaker Cause at Neath and Swansea, which was represented by Henry Squires, William Edwards, William Padley and Sylvanus Bevan, also Evan Rees, Neath. Evan Rees from Esgair-goch who joined Roberts in the Ironmongery business is first mentioned in 1769. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Ambrose and Martha Williams of Pontypool. The latter died at Neath in 1788 and was buried at the Friends' Burial Ground at Swansea.

Evan Rees died in 1816 aged 72. His son Evan says of him " We have lost a most affectionate father, the recollection of whose virtues will for ever remain fixed in our affection."

The Miers family had resided at Cadoxton some time after the middle of the 18th century. Like William Cole the Ironmaster, of Gloucester, who also settled at Cadoxton the same time, he belonged to the Society of Friends.

As to the Quaker Meeting House at Neath, Mr. Gibbins states in the " Friend," 1901 "Of the other Friends' Meeting Houses in this

country, that of Neath was built in 1799 on a portion of the old castle ground, kindly presented by Lady Mackworth, who herself was descended from Friends."

The statement leaves unfixed the initiation of the Friends Meeting House at Neath. We have stated that Thomas Roberts lived there in 1749, and that his legacy is dated 1774; it is possible the services commenced between 1769 to 1774. We can prove their existence in 1795 (four years before the Meeting House was built), for from Mary Howitt's testimony in "Good Words" for June, 1885 that her father, Samuel Botham, made the acquaintance of her mother, Ann Wood of Swansea, in 1795, when he attended first day meeting of Friends at Neath. Samuel Botham, the Uttoxeter Ironmaster who was surveying the Margam estate, met Ann Wood, a convinced Friend, from Swansea, at the table of Evan Rees; they discovered they were both fond of nuts, and a mutual attachment followed.

There was in those parts an aged ministering Friend of so saintly a character as to be regarded in the light of a prophet. This person told Ann Wood "If Samuel Botham make thee an offer of marriage, thou must by no means refuse him." Accordingly, before long, he was her accepted suitor. (For the full story see "History of the Vale of Neath," by D. Rhys Phillips, p. 447).

In the year 1796 on the sixth day of the twelfth month they took each other for man and wife after the prescribed simple form, in the fear of God and in the presence of that assembly. They were married in the Friends' Meeting House, Swansea, where the bride's mother then resided.

With the arrival of Peter and Anna T. Price in 1799, and the building of the Meeting House, the Quaker cause flourished.

Anna Tregelles Price was one of the most remarkable women of her time having ministered among the Friends before her marriage.

When the new assessment of taxes for war was announced at the end of the 18th Century, she, with two others travelled to the various Friends' Meetings with the message that our testimony against the shedding of blood must be exalted to a greater degree. She continued during the next 30 years to take a prominent part in Quaker Meetings and her children followed her spirttual example.

Amongst other Quaker families at Neath were the Foxes, Tregelles Elijah Waring, etc. His daughter Anna Letitia Waring was the well known hymn writer (some of whose hymns are in our Fellowship Hymn Book). Her best known hymn perhaps is

"Father, I know that all my life
Is portioned out for me,"

And another great great favourite is

"In heavenly love abiding,
No change my heart can fear."

She left the Society in 1840 and was baptised into the Church of England at Winchester in 1842.

The Redwood famiiy, who built the tannery (the white house, six stories high, is a noted land mark near the bridge) will be remembered by posterity as the ones who relieved the necessities of Iolo Morganwg in his closing years.

Edward Williams (Iolo) a noted Welsh Bard of the Vale of Glamorgan, said "I would be as glad to see one of the truly Christian Redwoods as to see an angel from Heaven." Such was one of the last missives the bard wrote.

Then there was Evan Rees, the first corresponding secretary of the Peace Society formed in 1816. He died at sea on his way to Australia in search of health. His brother, Jonathan Rees, died in 1869.

Of one of the workmen at Neath Abbey works who was a Friend, Joseph Pollard (disputing on a theological discussion with a fellow workman who was a Unitarian, named John Walters) says—

"Tydi y'wr Sosin pengam,
Llygad gam cas ei wedd,
Shon Wallter fydd dy enw
Tra'r ochor hyn i'r bedd.

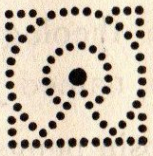
Pan groesi'r ochor arall
Ti dynnu wyneb trist
Yn wrthrych gwawd y diafol
Am duwdod wydra Crist."

We are prompted to ask what is the chief cause of Quakerism failure in Wales. Is it because we neglected the Welsh language, having no Welsh literatnre dealing with its principles. Another cause undoubtedly was the practice of disowning members who married out of the Society. Not only losing the members disowned, but also the potential membership of the children.

We have come into a rich inheritance others have sown. We are reaping of their labours. May we be worthy of them.

Whatever the futu e of our Society in Wales, we can pray in Whittier's words :

O, Spirit of the early day,
So pure and strong and true ;
Be with us in the narrow way
Our faithful fathers kn w,
Give strength the evil to forsake,
The Cross of Truth to bear,
And love and reverend fear to make
Our daily lives a prayer.



Copy of a Letter from London

Copy of a Letter, written in 1803, conveying a Legacy of £5 to the poor of Swansea Meeting

London, 26th of the 7th month, 1803

Dear Friend,

Peter Price,

Please to show this letter to William Grove at Swansea, and desire him to pay on my account, and give him the proper receipt, which will I believe, only require a 5/- stamp, my Aunt having died in 1784. Let the receipt be thus—Received of the Executor of Suzanna Bevan by the hand of William Grove, Five Pounds for a legacy left to the poor of Swansea Meeting. Thy intelligence respecting some of my friends in your parts is acceptable. In return please to give my love to the families at the Rope Works and Neath, and take a due share for thine own. Notwithstanding my fall I continue to consider Cwm Nedd a desirable spot, and have much reason to remember their kindnesses I have experienced on both sides of the river.

It is a time of much alarm in these parts and I believe Friends will find themselves tried to support their testimony against bearing arms. There seems however, a remarkable disposition in Government to respect our long known scruples and in this plan for generally learning the manual exercise, I understand we are to be exempt. In London where Friends are numerous I expect the importunity of their neighbours to make them join in someway, will occasion difficulty to divers, and the refusal gives rise to envy and warmth of temper. I wish it may be met with that wisdom, which is more especially necessary when we are endeavouring to vindicate our steady love to peace.

I remain,

Thy affectionate Friend,

J. G. Bevan

[For further information with regards to the Welsh Quakers, see Rev. Mardy Rees's "Quakers in Wales."]